

Message Text

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11
ACTION SIL-01

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E.O. 11652: M/A
TAGS: AORG, ILO, AS
SUBJECT: ELECTION OF DIRECTOR GENERAL OF
INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION (ILO)

REF: STATE 204762

1. LABATT IN DISCUSSION WITH ROBERT HAWKE, PRESIDENT AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF TRADE UNIONS (ACTU), ON OCTOBER 26, HAD OPPORTUNITY SOUND HIM OUT ON PROBABLE AUSTRALIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD SELECTION SUCCESSOR TO WILFRED JENKS. HAWKE SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED MATTER WITH IAN SHARP, SECRETARY, DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, AND WITH GEORGE POLITES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF EMPLOYERS' FEDERATIONS, BOTH OF WHOM ARE MEMBERS OF AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION TO ILO. APPARENTLY AUSTRALIANS ARE FAMILIAR WITH POSSIBILITIES MENTIONED IN PARA 2 REFTTEL. HAWKE SAID AUSTRALIANS OBVIOUSLY WILL REJECT IDEA OF "ANY FRENCHMAN, LET ALONE BLANCHARD OR BLAMONT" FOR THIS OFFICE. HE REJECTED ALSO THE NAMES OF TEVORDJRE AND MUNOZ-LEDO AS BEING "RIDICULOUS", THE FORMER HAVING EXHIBITED NO PARTICULAR TALENT FOR LABOR WORK AND THE LATTER BE CHARACTERIZED AS A "MEANINGLESS WINDBAG". HE PROFESSED TO KNOW BOLAN ONLY SLIGHTLY AND REGARDED MAINWARING AS "PLEASANT
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AND AMIABLE" BUT WITHOUT OTHER QUALIFICATIONS.

2. HAWKE SAID THAT THE AUSTRALIANS WERE IN EFFECT UNCOMMITTED AND OPEN TO SUGGESTION, AND THAT THEY WOULD WAIT FOR THE DISCUSSIONS AT THE ILO GOVERNING BODY MEETING WHICH HAWKE WILL ATTEND STARTING NOVEMBER 12.

3. HAWKE REPORTED ALSO THAT IN CONVERSATION WITH VISITING INDONESIANS DURING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 15, THE INDONESIANS HAD SOUNDED HIM OUT AS THEY HAD TENTATIVELY IN MIND TO NOMINATE HIM FOR THE POSITION. HAWKE PROFESSED TO HAVE RECEIVED THIS NEWS AS A "BOLT FROM THE BLUE". HE TOLD LABATT THAT OF COURSE HE COULD NOT GIVE THE IDEA ANY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BUT THAT IT DID OPEN UP A LINE OF THOUGHT WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE AUSTRALIANS JOINING IN A MOVE TO SECURE THE NOMINATION OF SOMEONE FROM THE ASIAN-PACIFIC AREA.

4. COMMENT: GIVEN HAWKE'S PRESENT AND CONTINUING INVOLVEMENT IN AUSTRALIAN POLITICS, IT IS PROBABLY BEYOND CONTEMPLATION THAT HE COULD BE CONSIDERED A SERIOUS CANDIDATE EVEN IF THE INDONESIANS AND OTHERS PRESS HIM HARD. IT IS APPARENT THAT HAWKE, AT LEAST, AMONG THE AUSTRALIANS, IS ABSOLUTELY COMMITTED AGAINST A FRENCH NOMINATION, BUT WOULD TEND TO FAVOR A NOMINEE OUTSIDE THE COMMUNIST BLOC, BUT WITH NO PREFERENCE FOR A WESTERN HEMISPHERE OR ASIAN-PACIFIC NOMINEE OVER WHAT HE WOULD CONSIDER A GOOD NOMINATION FROM WESTERN EUROPE. IT IS LABATT'S OPINION THAT AUSTRALIA IS COMPLETELY OPEN-MINDED AND WAITING TO ASSESS RESULTS OF CONVERSATIONS DURING UPCOMING GOVERNING BODY MEETING.
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